

Proactive Release

Published on or before: 24 March 2025

The following Cabinet papers and related Cabinet minutes have been proactively released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Title	Reference
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters – December 2024</i>	CAB-25-MIN-0023
<i>Cabinet Minute of Decision – Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters – 3 to 5 December 2024</i>	

Some parts of this information release would not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA). Where this is the case, the relevant sections of the OIA that would apply have been identified. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to OIA redaction codes:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government.



Cabinet

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters - December 2024

Portfolio

Foreign Affairs

On 10 February 2025, Cabinet **noted** the report from the Rt Hon Winston Peters under CAB-25-SUB-0023 on his travel, from 3 to 5 December 2024, to New Caledonia for a bilateral visit.

Rachel Hayward
Secretary of the Cabinet

Proactively Released by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

~~Restricted~~

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chair, Cabinet

Report on Overseas Travel: Rt Hon Winston Peters – 3 to 5 December 2024

- 1 This paper recommends that Cabinet note this report on travel to New Caledonia from Tuesday 3 December to Thursday 5 December 2024.

Report

- 2 The purpose of this travel to New Caledonia was to engage with a broad range of political, business and community representatives and position New Zealand as a helpful and constructive partner in the context of the May 2024 civil unrest.
s6(a) The visit had been rescheduled, after the initially planned travel to Noumea for 15 – 16 May had to be cancelled due to civil unrest. This was also the first bilateral visit by a New Zealand Foreign Minister to New Caledonia, geographically New Zealand's closest neighbour, in over 10 years.
- 3 The visit was centred around engagements with a diverse range of political actors in the territory and included a customary welcome at the Customary Senate, meetings with the French High Commissioner and President of New Caledonia's Government, as well as the President of Congress. The Minister also met with representatives from across the political spectrum, civil society representatives funded by the New Zealand Consulate Fund and business leaders. Other engagements included an aerial survey of the damage in Noumea, and a ceremony at the New Zealand military cemetery in Bourail.
- 4 The visit achieved New Zealand's objectives of demonstrating our enduring commitment to strengthening relationships in New Caledonia. The Minister emphasised in all his meetings that New Zealand had come to listen and to learn about the situation in New Caledonia and to gauge where New Zealand might be able to offer constructive assistance.
- 5 A key deliverable for the visit was the signing of the revised New Zealand-New Caledonia Joint Cooperation Plan, which the Minister signed following his bilateral meeting with President Louis Mapou. The Joint Cooperation Plan highlights our shared intention to work more closely with New Caledonia's government and institutions in the priority areas of people-to-people links, trade and economic cooperation and governance.
- 6 The Minister also announced a targeted support package that included the doubling of the New Zealand Consulate Fund to \$850,000 for 2024-2027, the expansion of tertiary scholarships to New Caledonia, and enhanced technical cooperation.

- 7 The Minister received an extensive update on the ongoing political and economic challenges facing New Caledonia from the French High Commissioner, Louis Le Franc. During his meetings with the French High Commissioner, the Minister also underlined the importance that New Zealand placed on France's continued relationship with New Caledonia and its role in the wider Pacific region.
- 8 The visit to New Caledonia was a strong signal of New Zealand's continued commitment to building our relationship with all actors in the territory and to deepening our understanding of the complexity of the current situation. The Minister's engagements with France achieved the objective of emphasising New Zealand's continued commitment to partnering with France in the Indo-Pacific in support of our shared interests. The visit also highlighted opportunities for New Zealand to build its relationship further with New Caledonia on issues of indigenous economic development and trade cooperation, and to support in constructive ways New Caledonia's pathway forward.

Proactive release

- 9 This Cabinet paper would be proactively released as per Cabinet Office Circular CO(18) 4, on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. Proactive release is subject to redaction as appropriate under the Official Information Act 1982.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet note this report.

Authorised for lodgement

Rt Hon Winston Peters

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs